



Contact: (916) 924-4060

FAX (916) 929-1680

1601 Exposition Blvd., FB 10

Sacramento 95815

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The following is a statement by California Farm Bureau Federation President Bob L. Vice, reacting to standards for San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta announced today by federal agencies:

"The new standards continue a disturbing trend: Less of California's water will be available for human needs, at a time when those human needs continue to increase. Without development of new water supplies, our state will remain at the mercy of strict federal environmental laws.

"We cannot continue to dedicate more water to flow out to the ocean without at the same time beginning to develop more water for our cities and farms. Water development will be crucial to serve California's growing population and to maintain jobs and business activity in the state.

"Throughout the delta standards process, the rigidity of federal law has forced us to the reluctant conclusion that farmers can only hope to minimize our water losses. The implementation of the standards will determine who feels the pain, and to what extent.

"Water rights must be protected absolutely as the standards take effect. Protection of California's water rights system and of the areas where water originates remain critical. Implementing the delta standards with those goals in mind will reduce the additional stress they will place on California's farm economy."

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Contact: office
Dave Kranz, home

(916) 924-4060
(916) 481-3828